

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION:

Claims 1, 8-14, 31-32, 38-54 and 59-61 are pending and under consideration. Claims 8, 9, 31, 32 and 59 are allowed. Claims 46, 47, 51 and 52 are objected to.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW

A telephonic interview was conducted between the Examiner and the Applicants' representative on February 9, 2007. In the interview, the Examiner took the position that paragraph [0038] of the present specification does not teach the advantages of the chamfered edge and concave opening in a tapered shape (claims 39 and 40), as previously asserted by the Applicants. Attached herewith is a declaration under 37 C.F.R. 132 further establishing these advantages.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103:

The rejections based on USSR 1137367 are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 45 (used herein as an example) recites a centering mechanism to vary the radial distance of the centering protrusions from the center of the non-contacting conveyance equipment. These features are illustrated, for example, in present Figs. 7A and 7B.

The cited reference teaches stops 7. In the interview, the Examiner also indicated that the stops 7 of USSR 1137367 realize a similar result to the claimed invention. In light of the advantages set forth in the attached declaration, it is respectfully submitted that the invention of claim 45 is patentable over this reference. Furthermore, it is noted that the invention of claim 45 may fix or release the lateral movement of the wafer while conveying the wafer. In contrast, the USSR reference cannot achieve this feature.

The remaining references do not overcome these deficiencies.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the

application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

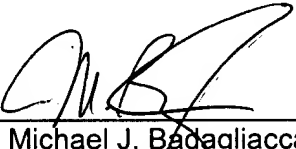
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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